

## High School Dropouts 2016-17 Massachusetts Public Schools

The annual high school dropout report represents a snapshot of those students who dropped out of school in any given year. The data contained in this dropout report reflect one year of dropout data across grades nine through twelve and not a particular cohort of students across four years. This report provides annual dropout data to education leaders to develop and strengthen dropout prevention programs in the state.

Please note that the Department has also calculated and released graduation rates for the 2017 cohort that provide a more complete picture of the outcomes of high school students in Massachusetts. It is important to keep in mind that the dropout data contained in the graduation rate reports is a cohort dropout rate and shows the cumulative effect of students dropping out over four years. The graduation rate reports can be viewed at: <http://www.doe.mass.edu/infoservices/reports/gradrates/>.

In the 2016-17 school year, 5,172 or 1.8 percent of students in grades nine through twelve dropped out of school.

**Table 1: State Dropout Trends: 2006-07 to 2016-17**

	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17
<b>Total HS Enrollment</b>	298,033	295,937	292,372	290,502	289,161	287,055	287,506	287,478	288,934	289,583	290,080
Number of Dropouts	11,436	9,959	8,585	8,296	7,894	7,051	6,248	5,746	5,346	5,523	5,172
Dropout Rate	3.8%	3.4%	2.9%	2.9%	2.7%	2.5%	2.2%	2.0%	1.9%	1.9%	1.8%

The Department did not make any major changes to the Student Information Management System (SIMS) data collection in the 2016-17 school year. However, fluctuation in dropout rates between 2004-05 and 2006-07 can be attributed to two significant methodological modifications that were made. These modifications in the dropout calculation have remained in the methodology and provide more comprehensive information on dropouts to help inform policy and programmatic decisions.

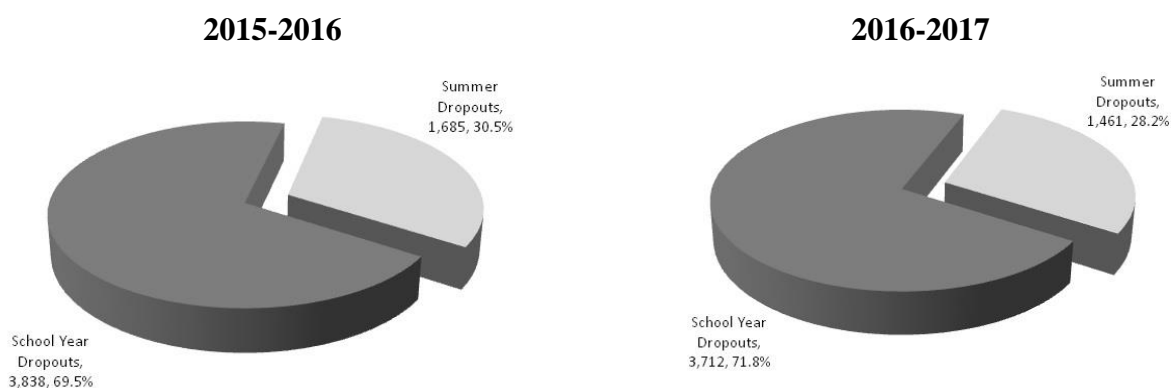
In the **2005-06** school year, the Department began to cross-reference SIMS data with the General Educational Development (GED) Testing Service database. In prior school years, the Department relied solely on district notification regarding students who received their GED. As a result, the Department more accurately tracks students who drop out of high school and then earn a GED therefore decreasing the number of students who are considered final dropouts. In 2014, the Department transitioned to the High School Equivalency Test (HiSET) and has continued to rely on that database to gather accurate information on high school equivalency earners.

In the **2006-07** school year, the Department modified the SIMS data element, *Enrollment Status at Time of Data Collection*. In prior years, districts would report the number of students who indicated that they were transferring to another district and the Department excluded them from the dropout calculations. The expanded dropout and transfer codes provide additional information to the Department on students' plans after leaving the district. Those students who were coded as a transfer to an in-state public school with no record of re-enrollment in another school district before October 1st of the following school year are considered to be dropouts.

**Table 2: Final Enrollment Status of the 2016-17 Dropout Count**

Code	Final Enrollment Status	Number of Dropouts	Percent of all Dropouts
Transfer	Transfer to an in-state public school (with no record of re-enrollment)	1,239	24.0%
Dropout	Enrolled in a non-diploma granting adult education program	636	12.3%
	Entered Job Corps	129	2.5%
	Entered the military	1	0.0%
	Incarcerated, district is no longer providing educational services	19	0.4%
	Left school due to employment	308	6.0%
	Confirmed dropout - plans unknown	1,483	28.7%
	Student's status/location unknown	1,357	26.2%
<b>Total Dropout Count</b>		<b>5,172</b>	<b>100%</b>

The final dropout count is based on two groups of students; summer and school year dropouts. Summer dropouts were reported in the October 1, 2016 SIMS submission as a dropout or a transfer to an in-state public school (with no record of re-enrollment) prior to the beginning of the 2016-17 school year, whereas school year dropouts were reported as either a dropout or as a transfer to in-state public (with no record of re-enrollment) during the 2016-17 school year. In 2016-17, the percentage of summer dropouts decreased by 2.3 percentage points while the percentage of school year dropouts increased from 2015-16.

**Figure 2: Comparison of Summer and School Year Dropouts Composing the Total Dropout Counts in 2015-16 and 2016-17**

Beginning in the 2003-04 school year, in compliance with the National Center for Education Statistics reporting guidelines, summer dropouts were applied to the grade in which they failed to enroll. Therefore, students who completed grade eight but did not enroll in grade nine were included in the analysis as grade nine summer dropouts.

**Table 3: Comparison of 2016-17 Summer Dropouts and School Year Dropouts by Grade**

			Number of Dropouts	Total Grade Dropouts	Percent of Grade Dropouts
Grade	9	Summer	484	1,501	32.2%
		School Year	1,017		67.8%
	10	Summer	245	1,196	20.5%
		School Year	951		79.5%
	11	Summer	327	1,250	26.2%
		School Year	923		73.8%
	12	Summer	405	1,225	33.1%
		School Year	820		66.9%

Beginning with the class of 2010, the Department required students to meet the following requirements to earn a Competency Determination (CD) in order to graduate from high school<sup>1</sup>:

1. Meet or exceed the Proficient threshold scaled score of 240 on the English Language Arts and Mathematics grade 10 Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS) tests, or (b) meet or exceed the Needs Improvement threshold scaled score of 220 on the English Language Arts and Mathematics grade 10 MCAS tests and fulfill the requirements of an Educational Proficiency Plan.
2. Meet or exceed the Needs Improvement threshold scaled score of 220 on the Science and Technology/Engineering MCAS test

Students who did not pass the grade ten MCAS had the opportunity to pass the MCAS through re-test opportunities before their scheduled graduation date. Among both grade eleven and grade twelve dropouts, 58.4 percent had earned a CD by meeting the standard before dropping out of school.

**Table 4: Dropout Rates and Percent of Dropouts Among Competency Determination (CD) Earners and Students without a CD**

Grade	CD Status	Number of Enrolled Students	Number of Dropouts	Dropout Rate	Percent of Dropouts
11	With CD	67,265	584	0.9%	46.7%
	Without CD	4,014	666	16.6%	53.3%
12	With CD	67,227	862	1.3%	70.4%
	Without CD	2,170	363	16.7%	29.6%
Total	With CD	134,492	1,446	1.1%	58.4%
	Without CD	6,184	1,029	16.6%	41.6%

<sup>1</sup> Data in this section can only be compared to tables from 2010; data from years prior to 2010 is not comparable because of this policy change. Additional information on the Competency Determination standards can be found at <http://www.doe.mass.edu/lawsregs/603cmr30.html?section=03>.

**Table 5: Annual Dropout Data for Selected Demographics: 2016-17**

		<b>Total HS Enrollment</b>	<b>Percent of HS Enrollment</b>	<b>Number of Dropouts</b>	<b>Annual Dropout Rate</b>	<b>Percent of all Dropouts</b>
<b>Grade</b>	<b>9<sup>th</sup></b>	76,183	26.3%	1,501	2.0%	29.0%
	<b>10<sup>th</sup></b>	73,221	25.2%	1,196	1.6%	23.1%
	<b>11<sup>th</sup></b>	71,279	24.6%	1,250	1.8%	24.2%
	<b>12<sup>th</sup></b>	69,397	23.9%	1,225	1.8%	23.7%
<b>Race/ Ethnicity</b>	<b>African American</b>	26,557	9.2%	775	2.9%	15.0%
	<b>Asian</b>	18,012	6.2%	105	0.6%	2.0%
	<b>Hispanic</b>	51,179	17.6%	2,172	4.2%	42.0%
	<b>Multi-Race, Non-Hispanic</b>	7,581	2.6%	131	1.7%	2.5%
	<b>Native American</b>	621	0.2%	25	4.0%	0.5%
	<b>Native Hawaiian</b>	276	0.1%	6	2.2%	0.1%
	<b>White</b>	185,854	64.1%	1,958	1.1%	37.9%
<b>Gender</b>	<b>Female</b>	143,040	49.3%	2,042	1.4%	39.5%
	<b>Male</b>	147,007	50.7%	3,127	2.1%	60.5%

The annual dropout rates for Hispanic and African American students decreased from 2015-16 by 0.3 percentage points each. The rates for students in grades 10 and 12 decreased, grade 11 remained stable, and grade 9 increased by 0.1 percentage point. Both male and female rates decreased from 2015-16.

**Table 6: Annual Dropout Rates for Selected Demographics: 2009-10 to 2016-17**

		<b>2009-10</b>	<b>2010-11</b>	<b>2011-12</b>	<b>2012-13</b>	<b>2013-14</b>	<b>2014-15</b>	<b>2015-16</b>	<b>2016-17</b>
<b>Grade</b>	<b>9</b>	2.8%	2.6%	2.3%	2.0%	1.9%	1.9%	1.9%	2.0%
	<b>10</b>	3.0%	2.8%	2.5%	2.2%	2.0%	1.8%	1.9%	1.6%
	<b>11</b>	2.6%	2.7%	2.4%	2.2%	2.0%	1.7%	1.8%	1.8%
	<b>12</b>	3.1%	2.9%	2.6%	2.4%	2.1%	2.0%	2.1%	1.8%
<b>Race/ Ethnicity</b>	<b>African American</b>	5.1%	4.8%	4.5%	3.9%	3.5%	3.0%	3.2%	2.9%
	<b>Asian</b>	1.6%	1.8%	1.5%	1.1%	1.0%	0.7%	0.7%	0.6%
	<b>Hispanic</b>	7.4%	7.0%	6.1%	5.4%	4.9%	4.4%	4.5%	4.2%
	<b>Multi-Race, Non-Hispanic</b>	3.2%	2.5%	2.6%	2.5%	2.3%	2.4%	2.4%	1.7%
	<b>Native American</b>	3.8%	3.4%	4.5%	4.2%	2.8%	3.4%	3.8%	4.0%
	<b>Native Hawaiian</b>	5.3%	4.4%	4.3%	4.4%	3.6%	2.7%	2.8%	2.2%
	<b>White</b>	1.8%	1.7%	1.5%	1.3%	1.2%	1.1%	1.1%	1.1%
<b>Gender</b>	<b>Female</b>	2.4%	2.3%	2.0%	1.7%	1.6%	1.5%	1.5%	1.4%
	<b>Male</b>	3.3%	3.2%	2.9%	2.6%	2.4%	2.2%	2.4%	2.1%

**Table 7: Annual Dropout Data by Race/Ethnicity and Gender: 2016-17**

		HS Enrollment	Percent of HS Enrollment	Number of Dropouts	Annual Dropout Rate	Percent of all Dropouts
African American	Female	13,142	4.5%	296	2.3%	5.7%
	Male	13,415	4.6%	479	3.6%	9.3%
Asian	Female	9,061	3.1%	40	0.4%	0.8%
	Male	8,949	3.1%	65	0.7%	1.3%
Hispanic	Female	24,869	8.6%	849	3.4%	16.4%
	Male	26,309	9.1%	1,323	5.0%	25.6%
Multi-Race, Non- Hispanic	Female	3,866	1.3%	50	1.3%	1.0%
	Male	3,715	1.3%	81	2.2%	1.6%
Native American	Female	316	0.1%	10	3.2%	0.2%
	Male	305	0.1%	15	4.9%	0.3%
Native Hawaiian	Female	130	0.0%	2	1.5%	0.0%
	Male	146	0.1%	4	2.7%	0.1%
White	Female	91,656	31.6%	795	0.9%	15.4%
	Male	94,168	32.5%	1,160	1.2%	22.4%

**Table 8: Annual Dropout Rates by Race/Ethnicity and Gender: 2009-10 to 2016-17**

		2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17
African American	Female	4.3%	4.1%	3.5%	3.0%	2.7%	2.3%	2.5%	2.3%
	Male	5.8%	5.5%	5.4%	4.7%	4.2%	3.7%	3.9%	3.6%
Asian	Female	1.3%	1.5%	1.3%	0.9%	0.9%	0.5%	0.6%	0.4%
	Male	1.9%	2.1%	1.7%	1.4%	1.2%	0.9%	0.8%	0.7%
Hispanic	Female	6.5%	6.0%	5.3%	4.5%	4.0%	3.8%	3.4%	3.4%
	Male	8.3%	8.0%	6.8%	6.2%	5.8%	5.0%	5.7%	5.0%
Multi-Race, Non- Hispanic	Female	2.8%	1.9%	1.9%	2.2%	1.7%	2.2%	2.3%	1.3%
	Male	3.6%	3.2%	3.3%	2.9%	3.0%	2.7%	2.5%	2.2%
Native American	Female	2.9%	2.9%	4.6%	4.0%	2.1%	3.3%	3.1%	3.2%
	Male	4.8%	3.8%	4.5%	4.3%	3.5%	3.5%	4.6%	4.9%
Native Hawaiian	Female	2.5%	3.6%	3.2%	3.4%	2.1%	2.8%	0.7%	1.5%
	Male	8.0%	5.1%	5.2%	5.2%	5.1%	2.7%	5.1%	2.7%
White	Female	1.4%	1.3%	1.2%	1.0%	1.0%	0.9%	0.9%	0.9%
	Male	2.1%	2.0%	1.8%	1.6%	1.5%	1.4%	1.4%	1.2%

Annual dropout rates decreased for most racial/ethnic groups between 2015-16 and 2016-17. Notable decrease were evidenced by Hispanic male (-0.7 percentage points) and Multi-Race female (-1.0 percentage points) groups. The white female rate was unchanged for the third consecutive year, while the male rate dropped for the first time since 2014-15.

**Table 9: Annual Dropout Rates for Special Populations: 2016-17**

		<b>Total HS Enrollment</b>	<b>Percent of HS Enrollment</b>	<b>Number of Dropouts</b>	<b>Annual Dropout Rate</b>	<b>Percent of all Dropouts</b>
<b>Students with Disabilities</b>	<b>Students with Disabilities</b>	45,309	15.6%	1,490	3.3%	28.8%
	<b>Students without Disabilities</b>	244,771	84.4%	3,682	1.5%	71.2%
<b>English Language Learner (ELL)</b>	<b>ELL</b>	17,891	6.2%	1,154	6.5%	22.3%
	<b>Non ELL</b>	272,189	93.8%	4,018	1.5%	77.7%
<b>Economically Disadvantaged<sup>2</sup></b>	<b>Economically Disadvantaged</b>	76,837	26.5%	2,745	3.6%	53.1%
	<b>Non Economically Disadvantaged</b>	213,243	73.5%	2,427	1.1%	46.9%
<b>High Needs</b>	<b>High Needs</b>	114,443	39.5%	3,958	3.5%	76.5%
	<b>Non-High Needs</b>	175,637	60.5%	1,214	0.7%	23.5%

**Table 10: Annual Dropout Rates for Special Populations: 2009-10 to 2016-17**

		<b>2009-10</b>	<b>2010-11</b>	<b>2011-12</b>	<b>2012-13</b>	<b>2013-14</b>	<b>2014-15</b>	<b>2015-16</b>	<b>2016-17</b>
<b>Students with Disabilities</b>	<b>Students with Disabilities</b>	4.7%	4.6%	3.6%	3.3%	3.3%	3.5%	3.1%	3.3%
	<b>Students without Disabilities</b>	2.5%	2.4%	2.2%	1.9%	1.7%	1.6%	1.7%	1.5%
<b>ELL</b>	<b>ELL</b>	8.5%	7.9%	6.9%	6.5%	6.3%	5.7%	6.6%	6.5%
	<b>Non ELL</b>	2.6%	2.5%	2.3%	2.0%	1.8%	1.6%	1.6%	1.5%
<b>Low- Income</b>	<b>Low-Income</b>	4.7%	4.8%	4.4%	3.8%	3.5%	-	-	-
	<b>Non Low-Income</b>	2.0%	1.8%	1.5%	1.3%	1.1%	-	-	-
<b>Economically Disadvantaged</b>	<b>Economically Disadvantaged</b>	-	-	-	-	-	3.3%	4.1%	3.6%
	<b>Non Economically Disadvantaged</b>	-	-	-	-	-	1.4%	1.2%	1.1%
<b>High Needs</b>	<b>High Needs</b>	-	3.1%	4.1%	3.8%	3.5%	3.4%	3.7%	3.5%
	<b>Non-High Needs</b>	-	2.4%	1.2%	0.9%	0.7%	1.0%	0.8%	0.7%

Dropout rates decreased from 2015-16 among Economically Disadvantaged and High Needs groups by 0.5 and 0.2 percentage points, respectively. The ELL group rate also dropped by 0.1 percentage point. Students with disabilities, however, had a rate increase of 0.2 percentage points from 2015-16.

<sup>2</sup> In the 2014-15 school year, the Department began determining income status using the Economically Disadvantaged indicator and discontinued use of the Low Income indicator. For more information, please see:

<http://www.doe.mass.edu/infoservices/data/ed.html>.

**Table 11: Annual Dropout Rates by School Type 2009-10 to 2016-17**

	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17
<b>Regular/Comprehensive Academic Schools (318)<sup>3</sup></b>	2.9%	2.8%	2.5%	2.2%	2.0%	1.8%	1.9%	1.7%
<b>Vocational-Technical Total (38)</b>	1.8%	1.6%	1.4%	1.1%	1.0%	1.0%	0.9%	0.8%
City/Town (9)	5.0%	4.4%	3.8%	2.7%	2.5%	2.4%	2.1%	1.7%
Regional/County/Independent (29)	0.9%	0.9%	0.9%	0.7%	0.7%	0.6%	0.6%	0.6%
<b>Charter Schools (45)<sup>4</sup></b>	5.3%	4.2%	3.3%	3.8%	3.5%	3.5%	3.3%	3.3%
<b>Schools Located in Cities<sup>5</sup> (189 )</b>	4.7%	4.5%	3.9%	3.4%	3.2%	2.8%	3.0%	2.8%
<b>Schools Located in Towns (214)</b>	1.4%	1.2%	1.1%	1.0%	0.9%	0.9%	0.8%	0.9%

The state dropout rate masks the wide disparity in individual school annual dropout rates, specifically the number of schools that have dropout rates below the state rate. The following chart illustrates the distribution of school dropout rates.

**Table 12: Annual Dropout Rates Among Schools: 2010-11 to 2016-17<sup>6</sup>**

	2010-11		2011-12		2012-13		2013-14		2014-15		2015-16		2016-17	
<i>Number of Schools Included</i>	354		355		358		363		364		371		368	
Annual Rate	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
<b>0</b>	12	3	21	6	31	9	26	7	30	8	30	8	<b>29</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>0.1 – 1.0</b>	129	36	121	34	124	35	150	41	151	41	159	43	<b>170</b>	<b>46</b>
<b>1.1 – 2.5</b>	102	29	105	30	116	32	106	29	104	29	101	27	<b>87</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>2.6 – 5.0</b>	54	15	58	16	49	14	42	12	39	11	38	10	<b>41</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>5.1 – 7.5</b>	24	7	17	5	12	3	8	2	13	4	9	2	<b>12</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>7.6 – 10.0</b>	7	2	7	2	2	1	4	1	5	1	7	2	<b>4</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>10.1 and above</b>	26	7	26	7	24	7	27	7	22	6	27	7	<b>25</b>	<b>7</b>

<sup>3</sup> Represents the number of schools in the category in the 2016-17 school year.

<sup>4</sup> Represents all charter schools with enrollment in grades nine through twelve, including those whose primary mission is to serve at-risk students

<sup>5</sup> As defined by the incorporation status within the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

<sup>6</sup>Only includes schools with enrollment of 75 students or more as dropout rates for schools with low enrollments are overly sensitive to small variations.